



**QUARTERLY REPORT**  
**OCTOBER – DECEMBER, 2016**  
**(FY Q2)**

**Submitted to**

**MENDOCINO COUNTY TOURISM COMMISSION**  
**COUNTY OF MENDOCINO**  
**TUESDAY MARCH 14, 2017**

# quarterly activities report

## october – december 2016

Marketing Plan strategic goals are:

- Increase overall visitation to Mendocino County, specifically in the spring and fall shoulder seasons
- Increase length of stay per visitation
- Increase visitor spending per day

## advertising & paid media

The second quarter of the fiscal year saw the start of digital marketing efforts across a variety of channels. The following advertising and paid media campaigns ran in the second quarter for total gross cost of \$75,507.17. Co-operative offsets totaled \$6,000; added value to programs was \$11,049. To December 31, 2016, the gross advertising and paid media expense is \$164,353.84

### CC Media

- Digital marketing media buys are made by CC Media with an expenditure of \$34,365 for the quarter. Campaigns included Google general search and remarketing, pet-friendly, lodging, events, Queerty/Gay Cities, and geo-fencing. Over 4.6 million impressions were recorded with 18,893 click-throughs to the VisitMendocino.com website. The average click-through rate was 0.41% with an average cost per click of \$2.54.

### Other Digital Campaigns

- TravelGuidesFree.com: cost \$450 for the quarter with 1,213 consumer leads and 38 email opt-ins.
- VacationFun.com: cost \$2,437.50 with 422 consumer leads and 69 email opt-ins. In addition to this lead generating program, a nationwide contest is running, promoting the Mendocino County destination; cost per lead is \$5.78.
- Bay Area News Group: \$2,500 with an 0.04% click-through rate (311 clicks at \$8.04 each). The digital served as an additional part of the print package of Eat Drink Play.
- TripAdvisor.com: \$3,750 with 7,289 clicks (CPC \$0.51 each).
- DogTrekker continues as a valued partner to Visit Mendocino County. The program cost is \$671 per month for a total of \$2,013 for the quarter with 2,123 click-throughs (CPC at \$0.95 each).

### Direct Mail

- Direct mail campaign dropped in October 2016: a postcard with a festival and event calendar to 20,000

households in the Santa Rosa, Sacramento, Berkeley, and San Francisco regions with income \$135k and above; goal is to increase exposure and traffic to events through April 2017. Cost of the program was \$5,507 plus postage for a total of \$11,000. ROI is 1,031 site visits for a CPC of \$10.67 and a CPD (cost per distribution) \$0.55.

### **E-Newsletter**

- Mother Jones ran a dedicated email in October highlighting the Mushroom, Wine & Beer Festival. The email went to 23,327 subscribers. The cost was \$1,170 with an impressive open rate of 19.2% but only 97 click-throughs to the website. Costs were offset by \$150 with the Mendocino County Museum as a co-op partner.

### **Print Advertising**

- On the print side, Alaska Airlines ran a one-page advertorial and two pages of cooperative advertising in their December in-flight magazine. Distribution is estimated at 630,000. MCTC's investment was \$14,905 with a \$6,000 coop offset and an added value of \$4,800 for an editorial that the PR team worked on with Paradigm Media.
- The VIA magazine consumer leads, which totaled 228 and 35 email opt-ins, tapered off during the quarter.

### **Coming Up**

- Campaigns starting third quarter and beyond include Today's Bride (print and digital); Bay Area News Group Eat, Drink, Play section (January 8, 2017); Small Market Meetings (digital stand-alone emails); Mother Jones e-newsletter; HomeAway.com (digital); Comcast (broadcast ads in Sacramento and parts of the Bay Area and Sports Network); California 2017 Official Visitor's Guide (Visit CA).

## website & social media

### website

- The [VisitMendocino.com](http://VisitMendocino.com) website continues to be updated and enhanced. Plans are being formed for a website refresh including back-end updates, reorganization of content, and an SEO review. Partners and community members are encouraged to post their own events directly to the site.
- Our website blogs continue to be a hit with readers. In the past quarter, we've published 12 blogs:
  - \* [There's a Winesong in the Autumn Air](#)
  - \* [It Must be Time for Vacation!](#)
  - \* [Not Your Average Pet!](#)
  - \* [Mushroom Mania](#)
  - \* [Catch of the Day!](#)

- \* [The Spirits of Mendocino County](#)
- \* [Explore the Unknown](#)
- \* [Adventure in Mendocino County](#)
- \* [Make Merry in Mendocino County](#)
- \* [Mendo-Made Stocking Stuffers](#)
- \* [Storms and Where to Watch Them!](#)
- \* [Well, Well, Wellness... it's 2017!](#)

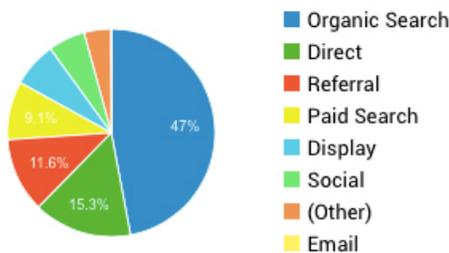
We continue to carry key messaging across multiple platforms: blog, monthly consumer newsletter, and social media for highest audience penetration.

## google analytics october – december

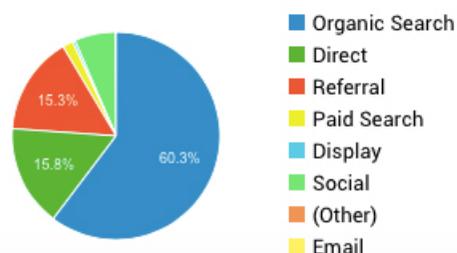
Analytics for the quarter rose for October and then slipped; the number of users rose by approximately 6,000 vs. the previous quarter. The percentage of new visitors to the site fell from 78.8% to 74.6%.

	october	november	december	total/avg
<b>unique visits (sessions)</b>	20,036	17,353	18,955	56,344
<b>users</b>	15,539	13,769	15,393	44,701
<b>avg. time on site</b>	0:02.52	0:02.50	0:02.27	0:02:43
<b>avg. bounce rate</b>	58.84%	58.00%	60.93%	59.26%
<b>new sessions</b>	73.05%	74.13%	76.50%	74.56%

Oct 1, 2016 - Dec 31, 2016



Jul 1, 2016 - Sep 30, 2016



**Top search channels** are shown in the following graphics, quarter 2 vs. quarter 1.

Website users continue to come from major gateway markets, including San Francisco, Sacramento, and Los Angeles. Analytics for the quarter indicate the top five landing pages (that is, the first page the user first goes to) include the home page, Mushroom festival, lodging, events, Crab Festival.

## social media

- We continue to grow our Facebook presence and drive viral growth. Our focused posts aim to highlight the beauty of the county and tell the unique story of the destination. Facebook fan growth has slowed, with the addition of 325 fans for the quarter, bringing the total to 55,297.
- The **“Top Five” Facebook posts** by engagement are:
  1. Make Merry in Mendocino County -- reach: 4,704; engagement: 9.6% (12/2/16)
  2. Our Mendocino County redwoods are thankful for the rain. What’s your favorite Mendocino County redwood forest? -- reach: 27,047; engagement: 9.6% (10/25/16)
  3. We love when you visit, but you might want to use Highway 20 instead. -- reach: 6,061; engagement: 9.2% (11/15/16)
  4. If traffic’s getting you down, come on up. Our roads lead you to beautiful places. Definitely something to be thankful for. -- reach: 9,696; engagement: 8.4% (11/21/16)
  5. It’s time to get crabby, but not because it’s Monday. -- reach: 43,917; engagement: 8.3% (12/12/16)

**Facebook demographics** are:

### Gender

- \* 32% Male & 68% Female

### Country Top 5

- \* US: 53,467)
- \* Mexico: 196)
- \* U.K.: 194
- \* Philippines: 142
- \* Italy: 97

### Top 5 Out-of-County Cities

- \* Sacramento
- \* Ukiah
- \* San Francisco
- \* Stockton
- \* San Jose

Our **Instagram** presence continues to grow, increasing from 5,630 to 6,251 followers.

# public relations

Public relations continues to be a strong pillar of the Mendocino County Tourism Commission. Following on from the prior quarter, PR gained placements in A-list publications such as *Sunset*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Forbes.com*, *Modern Luxury*, *KRON-4*, and *Vogue*, among many others! Public relations efforts have paid off with well above expected media coverage and impressions. FAM trips continue to be of a high caliber and produced numerous articles in the mainstream press. We expect our current successes to carry forward through the second half of the fiscal year.

Due to a change in personnel at Destination Counselors International (DCI), who were retained in the first quarter, PR results from their organization were not as expected. DCI was pivotal in setting up a highly successful NYC media mission attended by Koleen Hamblin with A-list media including *Rolling Stone*, *Organic Life*, *AM New York*, *Travel + Leisure*, *Sherman's Travel*; *Hemispheres*, *Martha Stewart Weddings*, and *Thrillist* (see Chelsea Davis below). The Marketing Committee made the decision to terminate DCI's contract as of November 30, 2016.

## press visits october – december (KOLI Communications)

<b>name</b>	<b>publication</b>	<b>FAM trip</b>
<b>Jackie Burrell</b>	<i>Bay Area News Group</i>	October 9 & 10
<b>Alex Pulaski</b>	<i>Alaska Airlines, LA Times</i>	October 13–16
<b>Leilani Labong</b>	<i>7x7.com</i>	November 5 & 6
<b>Kathy Chin Leong</b>	<i>South Bay Accent Magazine</i>	December 13–16
<b>Chelsea Davis</b>	<i>7x7.com</i>	December 19–21

## media placements & reach

- Reporting for the second quarter of the fiscal year reveals 122 media placements, with 45+million impressions and an advertising equivalency of \$5,253,494.
- We issued four press releases to over 2,000 outlets:
  - \* New York Hot Sheet
  - \* Welltality is the New Hospitality
  - \* Crab Fest Media Alert
  - \* Winter Events in Mendocino County

## sample placements

The following are a sampling of *some* of the stories that hit the print and online press during the first quarter. All our media articles are stored in a digital archive. Please call our Fort Bragg office if you would like to review them.

<i>Modern Luxury SF</i>	<i>Forbes</i>	<i>VIA</i>	<i>Sunset</i>
<i>KRON4</i>	<i>Seattle Times</i>	<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>	<i>7x7.com</i>
<i>Los Angeles Times</i>	<i>Sacramento Bee</i>	<i>East Bay Times</i>	<i>AFAR magazine</i>
<i>Travel Weekly</i>	<i>Alaska Airlines inflight</i>	<i>New York magazine</i>	<i>Vogue</i>



## video shoot

Filming is complete on the video. Staff and contractors are working on the release date.

## hidden object game

The hidden object game, depicting ten iconic Mendocino County scenes, is set for release, most likely March 2017. The game will be offered as a free download on both Google and iOS app stores. It will be publicized via the consumer e-newsletter and on the VMC website.

## marketing committee

The Marketing Committee continues to meet on a regular basis to make recommendations regarding PR and marketing programs.



## sales

- Representing the North Coast tourism Council, participated in the Visit CA Canadian mission. Met with approximately 400 retail agents and 50 tour operators in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver. Canada is the number one international market for Mendocino County. Shared leads with our partners.
- Attended the Here and There Trade Show in Portland OR. Oregon is one of our secondary markets and there was a lot of interest in Mendocino County. Obtained several hundred names for our database.
- Outreach to stakeholders for Visit CA FAM visit.
- Prepare itineraries for FIT agents.
- Planning a meetings and group sales mission for the third quarter.
- Begin development of incentive program for corporate companies and organizations for next fiscal year.

## visitor services

- Shifted the gateway sign from highway 128 to the Willits Bypass area in an effort to steer more traffic to downtown Willits and the coast.
- Continue to work on tear off maps for Ukiah and Willits.
- Working on updates to Visitor Guide; reprinted the mini guide and reprinting the Redwood Highway map.
- Planning for consumer sales events for next fiscal year.
- Begin tracking of visitor-facing collateral supplied to county outlets.

## festivals & events

- The November Mushroom, Wine & Beer Festival resulted in 24 activities and 26 events. Participants included 5 breweries, 37 wineries, 30 restaurants, and 25 lodging properties. The brochure (15,000 copies) was distributed both inside and outside the county. It was downloaded 2,161 times from the VMC website and “mushroom” page views totaled 13,997.
- The festival committee expanded its grant program to support festivals and events that will potentially bring visitation to the county. The Committee reviewed (6) six grant applications at the October 2016 meeting. Of the (6) six applications, (3) three were awarded funding. These include:
  - \* \$2,500 Mushroom, Wine & Beer Camp in Willits (transportation)
  - \* \$1,000 First Highway 128 Holiday Wine Passport in Anderson Valley (development)

\* \$2,500 Rose' Today Festival in Hopland (marketing)

- Compiled events for the 18th Annual Crab, Wine & Beer Festival; promoted events, activities and lodging specials.
- Printed 20,000 Crab, Wine & Beer brochures with 13,000 distributed outside the county. The remainder went to lodging and other county businesses. The VMC website received 7,507 "crab" page views in the quarter.
- Assisted with launch event for upcoming June 2017 Rosé Today Country Garden Party (in Hopland);
- Outreach to art communities throughout the county to build interest/events for April 2017 Almost Fringe Festival.
- Attended monthly Anderson Valley Winegrowers Association BoD meetings and MCTC Visitors Services Committee meetings; prepared agendas/minutes, staffed and coordinated Festival Committee meetings.

## ops & admin

- Fulfilled over 250 visitor inquiries and other information as requested.
- Hosted 264 visitors at the Fort Bragg office and began phasing out the Fort Bragg retail operation.
- Updated the internal office phone system to a VOIP system (savings \$150/month); linvested in BigContacts, an online database program for better data storage.
- Filled the vacancies for the Sales & Hospitality Coordinator, Office Coordinator and Tourism Marketing Assistant.
- Partnered with Visit Ukiah with the hire of a Social Media Coordinator for both organizations. This partnership helps offset the VMC budget by \$5,000 for this fiscal year.
- Completed the transition and negotiation process with Richard Strom from employee to independent contractor.
- Developed the Visit Mendocino County Team Report.
- Assisted in the recruitment of MCTC Board vacancies.
- Helped guide the Finance Committee through a mid-year budget review.
- Drafted a Cannabis Action Plan for MCTC Board review.
- Secured the contract with the Coraggio Group to help construct a three-year strategic plan for MCTC.
- Developed the MCTC Executive Director Travel Expense & Capitalization policies.
- Worked with the Marketing Committee to design the request for proposal for a professional marketing agency.
- Began planning the schedule and presenters for a Marketing, Sales & Communication Summit for January.
- Continued lodging listening sessions (45% complete).
- Participated in the BID Advisory Board Meetings for the annual report.
- Regular attendance at industry meetings and functions throughout Mendocino County.